



About the Alliance

Scotland's International Development Alliance (the Alliance) is the membership body in Scotland for everyone committed to creating a fairer world, free from poverty, injustice and environmental threats. Our membership brings together a diverse range of over 200 international NGOs, faith-based organisations, companies, universities, charitable trusts, public sector bodies and individuals that operate in over 100 countries.

How should the Scottish Government engage with the EU and what should it seek to achieve from its engagement?

The principles and universality of creating a fairer world through sustainable development should underpin the Scottish Government's external affairs policy with regard to the EU. The EU is the largest donor to overseas development assistance programmes in the world, and the largest donor to climate change mitigation and adaptation action.

The development trajectory of developing countries is affected by a range of policies including migration (facilitating remittances), international tax and trade policies and rules. It is therefore vital that the EU and its member states seek coherence of policies to ensure that the efficacy of their development assistance is not undermined by contradictory policies.

The Scottish Government should therefore aim to engage the EU on policy coherence through a number of routes:

- Engage in the areas of international development that the EU focuses on and make the case why the EU should seek Scotland's participation, as a pro-EU, pro-development, internationalist small country with expertise and unique experiences to offer to the EU and to international development.
- Support civil society to maintain strong links with European organisations. By doing this Scotland can influence specific sectors through EU forums.
- Make Scotland a policy coherence case study and through that seek to influence the EU to implement policy coherence – continuing to develop or sustain a strong Scotland-EU relationship even in the face of Brexit.
- Consider how other Scottish Government directorates outwith External Affairs can link with EU networks. For example, the Education Directorate should join GENE – Global Education Network Europe – the network of Ministries and Agencies with national responsibility for Global Education in European countries. This network involves both EU and non-EU countries.

What should the priorities of the Scottish Government be in developing its external affairs work and overseas presence, including its international development policy?

Scotland's economic development has, for centuries, benefited from, and exploited, global inequalities, from the slave trade era to the vastly unequal burden of emissions on Global South countries. However, historically, Scotland has also been highly supportive of global development and funding for it, and the Scottish people continue to do so via the UK Government's Official Development Assistance as well as their own philanthropy.

Today's challenges in an interconnected world, though, require more than just traditional aid from nation states. Achieving global sustainable development requires leadership from all corners of global society to reduce emissions, to consume ethically, to

welcome migrants, to challenge injustice, to reject inequality and to build a society that does not harm others, internationally or intergenerationally.

As such, the Scottish Government's external affairs work and overseas presence must prioritise this leadership role on sustainable development. This includes but is not limited to:

- measuring and reporting on Scotland's global environmental and human impact footprint holistically. As indicators are developed and honed that aim to measure progress towards National Performance Framework outcomes, particularly our 'positive contribution internationally', we must ensure they contribute to measuring coherence in relation to our global footprint (including human impact elsewhere) across a full range of sectors, such as trade & investment, supply chains in procurement, travel & tourism and waste management
- adopting a headline measure of progress beyond GDP growth that represents the broader concerns of human and ecological wellbeing, including the impact on future generations elsewhere, and championing this approach internationally
- Using public procurement, public policy and leadership on business practice in Scotland to support sustainable development.
- Through its own purchasing, its requirements of other public bodies and agencies, and its public policy levers on the actions of private businesses, the Scottish Government should focus on human rights due diligence in supply chains, with explicit consideration of living wages, living incomes and fair purchasing practices
- Supporting calls for cancellation of all external debt payments due to be made in the next two years for those countries in need, and most urgently, for 77 of the world's lowest-income countries as identified by the World Bank
- Championing loss and damage in climate finance, while boosting the quantity of grant-based support in climate finance and ensure more of it is focused on the least developed and most vulnerable countries

Does the Scottish Government's budget for external affairs deliver value for money?

The world is at a critical juncture, with multiple intersecting crises. No longer can we separate the nature crisis and the climate emergency from our consumption habits and fossil-fuel dependency, nor can we decouple our own economic prosperity from the poverty experienced elsewhere.

Scotland prides itself on making a positive contribution to the world, but this only holds weight if we measure that contribution holistically.

As such, the external affairs budget can only deliver value for money if there is full transparency over how that budget is spent. In the most recent Scottish Budget, figures state that only £26.6m is spent on external affairs. Of this, a significant portion goes towards International development funding.

The Scottish Government's international development programming, although small, has a significant impact across its four partner countries in tackling global issues, and the Alliance strongly believes this delivers value for money.

The Alliance and its members welcomed the commitment to increase the International Development Fund to £15m per annum in the most recent Programme for Government.

To deliver further value for money, a normative approach to international development budgeting would be welcome. This would inflation-proof the budget and drive towards political consensus, over time..

That said, more scrutiny over this spend is essential.

This scrutiny should be led by parliament using a Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD) approach, perhaps using a screening tool like the *OECD Screening tool*.

Such scrutiny might be effectively carried out by a standalone Committee like CEEAC, and this would be a step forward, especially if scrutiny of this kind was built into its remit, and there was a duty to report regularly.

However, we emphasise that a PCSD approach to parliamentary scrutiny should be embedded across all committees to ensure a coherent approach to everything Scottish Government does, as per the PCSD definition below.

This could involve building more time into the current Parliamentary processes to allow existing Committees to scrutinise legislation for policy coherence and reform of parliamentary processes.

Furthermore, all new external affairs policy should be systematically 'proofed' against thematic priorities, such as climate justice, gender equality, and fair-trade principles, and publicly reported on and debated in Parliament. This could be done using the NPF and SDG frameworks, and incorporate the use of established SDG interaction typologies, such as Nilsson et al.'s 2016 7-point typologyⁱⁱ.

Another way to ensure value for money is for Government to publish its Contribution to International Development Report (CIDR) less frequently (biennially) and widen its remit, reporting on coherence across all external affairs activities rather than simply on Scottish Government international development funding and activities.

The CIDR should challenge the government to do better in other areas. Ideally, it could have a focus on incoherencies, policy trade-offs and gaps in how best to achieve sustainable development universality.

This could be done thematically, and have a new focus every two years.

However, at a minimum producing a biennial report as opposed to annual one would allow more time to analyse policies, programme and impact across the external affairs directorate, and better report on policy coherence across a range of priority areas.

As the world emerges from the COVID-19 crisis, principled, coherent, transparent and accountable international development funding is more important than ever.

What principles should inform the Scottish Government's international engagement (e.g. economic, democratic, human rights, climate change or cultural / 'soft power' priorities)?

The Scottish Government must put solidarity with marginalised people and communities in low income countries at the heart of all its external relations, and take a sustainable development approach at all times. Human rights and equality are integral to sustainable development.

As one of the first nations to sign up to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it is right that a commitment to SDGs underpins the Scottish Government's international engagement. The SDGs include 17 interlinked goals that are both universal and indivisible from one another. In other words, progress towards one goal cannot be separated from progress on any other across space and time.

We see all aspects of external affairs policy as inextricably linked in this same way, particularly in terms of how they affect our ability to contribute to tackling global challenges such as poverty, inequality, injustice and climate change. Achieving policy coherence means considering all our actions holistically through a sustainable development universality lens.

The economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development must be considered holistically by all parts of Scottish society, including government and the private sector when deciding our approach to any external affairs decision. For example, trade and investment strategies should not be decided upon based solely on the economic benefit for Scotland or Scottish business alone, and must consider environmental, economic and social outcomes elsewhere, particularly in developing countries, even in those that are not priority countries in the International Development Strategy.

The trade and investment that we promote, the subsidies our government provides to specific industries and the strategic objectives we focus on should be systemically assessed against a variety of sustainable development indicators.

Promoting the concept of 'Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development' (PCSD) (SDG 17.14) should therefore underpin and inform all external affairs decisions on the basis that by enhancing policy coherence the Scottish Government can add significant value to its global citizenship goals.

PCSD is defined as:

“An approach and policy tool to integrate the economic, social, environmental and governance dimensions of sustainable development at all stages of domestic and international policy making.” (OECD 2016, 2018)

Importantly, the National Performance Framework (NPF) includes an outcome stating that Scotland should 'make a positive contribution internationally'. The term 'positive contribution' should be defined using a holistic PCSD approach, and all of the Scottish Government's international engagement should stem from that definition.

should that engagement be based on geographical or policy focus?

The Scottish Government should prioritise its international engagement through both a thematic and geographic focus.

This should include maintaining a partnership approach to its international development work given the limited funding that it receives, and the positive outcomes of the partnership approach, which was highlighted in the Scottish Governments inaugural Contribution to International Development Report in 2018ⁱⁱⁱ.

However, the addition of thematic priorities as well, such as gender equality and climate justice, would help to make sure all elements of our international engagement support one another and do not undermine other areas.

Most countries have bilateral development cooperation and partnership with a limited number of countries (Ireland 9, and soon to be increased; Sweden 35, etc), but the addition of thematic areas of focus, if approached holistically through a PCSD lens, can help drive forward real progress on cross-cutting issues in partner countries.

The additional funding on specific thematic areas could also help to maximise coherence with other sectors or domestic policy priorities, as well as opportunities for collaboration between Scotland's public and private sectors on aid projects in specialist areas.

This would build on the experience of, for example, Police Scotland's support of justice initiatives in Zambia and Malawi, Scottish Water and WaterAid's collaboration on WASH in Rwanda and Malawi, and the many projects over the past 15 years working with NHS boards, other SG departments and the private sector.

Crucially, this would support improvement and learning for what works best in different parts of the world, help harness Scottish expertise, and maximise Scotland's contribution to creating a fairer, kinder world.

Furthermore, the inclusion of thematic priorities, and thereby a systemic PCSD assessment of all external affairs policy against specific thematic areas, could help to ensure that we are not only driving forward on that priority with our partner countries more coherently (in our international development strategy for example), but that spill-over effects of our international engagement are not negatively affecting ANY developing country, partner or otherwise.

How do the Scottish Government's EU and international policies interact with UK foreign and diplomatic policy in these areas?

The Scottish Government can explicitly support UK commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals especially as implementation ratchets up over the next 5 years and demonstrate that it is an ally in supporting the UK meet the goals domestically (including on gender equality) as well as helping partner countries attain these shared international targets. Emphasising the importance of policy coherence and leading by example also arguably supports the expressed intentions of the integrated review of Foreign Policy, noting the importance of ensuring that all interactions with international partners sustain and support each other and that trade, for example, does not undermine human rights based commitments in international development.

ⁱ https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/better-policies-for-sustainable-development-2016/a-new-framework-for-policy-coherence-for-sustainable-development_9789264256996-6-en#page5

ⁱⁱ <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs11625-017-0470-0#CR25>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/contribution-international-development-report-2017-18/pages/4/>